

**A STUDY OF AL-GHAZALI'S CONCEPT OF MORAL  
BEHAVIOR AMONG POSTGRADUATE STUDENTS**

**OMAR ALAMARI M. ALSHBAILI**

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**By**

**OMAR ALAMARI M. ALSHBAILI**

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## NOTES ON TRANSLITERATION

Arabic Letter	Transliteration	Short vowels
ء	(hamzah)	
ب	B	
ت	T	
ث	Th	Long vowels
ج	J	ا ā
ح	ḥ	و ū
خ	kh	ي i
د	D	
ذ	dh	Diphthongs
ر	R	او aw
ز	Z	اي ay
س	S	
ش	Sh	Doubled
ص	ṣ	iyy ( final form =/i/i) ي
ض	ḍ	uww (final form =/u/) و
ط	ṭ	
ظ	ẓ	
ع	(ayn)	
غ	gh	
ف	F	
ق	Q	
ك	K	
ل	L	
م	M	
ن	N	
هـ	W	
و	H	
ي	Y	

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# **KAJIAN TINGKAH LAKU MORAL DARI SUDUT PANDANGAN AL- GHAZALI DALAM KALANGAN PELAJAR IJAZAH TINGGI**

## **ABSTRAK**

Tujuan kajian semasa adalah untuk memahami dan mengenal tingkah laku moral berdasarkan penulisan Al-Ghazali. Selain itu juga untuk menjelaskan asas, ciri-ciri, tingkah laku moral yang standard, dan mengetahui arah yang membawa kepada pemerolehan akhlak yang baik sebagai pendorong dalam membangunkan pelbagai aspek personaliti manusia. Kedua-dua kaedah penyelidikan iaitu kualitatif dan kuantitatif telah digunakan dalam kajian semasa ini. Dalam metodologi penyelidikan kualitatif, teks telah dikenal pasti, dikumpulkan, dikategorikan, dan diekstrak dengan menghubungkan konsep dan pemikiran yang diperolehi daripada buku yang ditulis oleh Al-Ghazali. Di samping itu, kajian ini mengandungi soal selidik untuk mengenal pasti kefahaman dan tingkah laku moral dalam kalangan pelajar universiti. Kajian ini dilaksanakan ke atas 241 orang pelajar ijazah tinggi (Sarjana dan PhD) dari Pusat Pengajian Ilmu Pendidikan dan Sains Kemasyarakatan Universiti Sains Malaysia. Keputusan kajian menunjukkan tahap kefahaman balas adalah sangat baik dan min secara umumnya berjumlah 4.29. Juga tidak terdapat perbezaan yang signifikan berdasarkan jantina. Di samping itu, maklumat mengenai pendidikan dan psikologi di dalam penulisan Al-Ghazali mempunyai banyak kebenarannya terutama perkara yang berkaitan konsep tingkah laku moral sebagai satu konsep menyeluruh dan berkesan dalam pembangunan aspek psikologi manusia yang selaras dari segi minda dan undang-undang agama. Selain itu, penjelasan mengenai tingkah laku moral yang benar akan menawarkan banyak ciri-ciri asas akhlak yang berkualiti.

# **A STUDY OF AL-GHAZALI'S CONCEPT OF MORAL BEHAVIOR AMONG POST GRADUATE STUDENTS**

## **ABSTRACT**

The purpose of the current study was to understand and identify the moral behavior based on Al-Ghazali writings. Also to clarify foundational, characteristics, standard moral behavior, and knowing the ways that lead to the acquisition of good morals as a motivator in developing the different aspects of human personality. Both qualitative and quantitative research methodology was utilized in the current study. In the qualitative research methodology the texts were identified, gathered, categorized, and extracted with relation to the concepts, and thoughts abstracted from the books written by Al-Ghazali. In addition, the current study contained a questionnaire to understand and identify the moral behavior among university student. The population of the current study consisted 241 postgraduate students (Master and PhD) from the school of Education Studies and the school of Social Sciences of the University Science Malaysia. The results revealed that the level of understanding was very great and the arithmetic mean in general amounted 4.29. Also, there is no statistical differences existed based on gender. There are great amount of useful educational and psychological information in Al-Ghazali's the writings specifically those related the concept of moral behavior as a comprehensive and effective concept in development the human psychological aspects from both mind and religious law. Besides, clarifies the right path to moral behavior and feeds many of the basic qualities which provide the basis of good morals.

## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **1.1 Introduction**

Morals occupy an important aspect of character building, specifically values and ideals, standards, customs, and traditions (Ba-antar, 1990). Moreover, morals identify the characteristics that give a person a human form of integrity, maturity, and compatibility, as well as psychological stability.

Prophet Muhammad (P.B.U.H) confirmed the importance of morals when he stated, “I was sent but to complete the good of morals” (Ibn Hanbal, 1992, p.501). This provides clear evidence of the importance of the behavioral aspect of the human personality. Human behavior depends on the extent of the person’s stock of human knowledge and cognitive and emotional morals, as well as well-established principles of continuous processes adhered to in all positions in his changing life. Therefore, personality would not be complete without the existence of morals.

Moral behavior is one of the moral issues common to all humanity that philosophers and thinkers have been drawn to research and study throughout the ages until the present. Historical roots and contributions of great Muslim scholars were greatly affected by the Islamic ethics presented in the Holy Quran and the Sunnah (Al-Sulaimany & Bar, 1995).

Al-Haddad (1996) explained the most important faithful and Quranic behavioral morals advocated by Islamic law, namely:

- A. Moral and behavioral faith, which include sincerity, honesty, appreciation, love, and repentance.
- B. Self-behavioral morals, which include honesty, patience, modesty, and simplicity.
- C. Morals of worship, including prayer, zakat (alms-giving), fasting, and pilgrimage.
- D. Morals of behavior, including honesty, loyalty, patience, pardon, compassion, and generosity.
- E. General social morals, including greeting and response to greetings, leave-taking, refraining from gazing at the prohibited sights, hospitality, and all types of charity.

When the Muslim world began to expand and spread civilization and culture, Arab and Islamic culture were affected by other cultures, which preceded the era of Al-Ghazali. Scholars, writers, and philosophers excelled, and they studied and wrote on all types of sciences. Moreover, since the beginning of the second century, Muslim scholars seemed to direct their attention towards the translation of books on various sciences of ancient civilizations as a result of the caliphs' encouragement. Consequently, this condition resulted in the emergence of a great number of Islamic and moral studies as a natural result of the transfer and translation of knowledge and the encouragement of the caliphs (Seljuk, 1961).

This scientific movement helped in the emergence of a large number of Muslim scholars, whose writings included studies on many educational and psychological aspects.

One of these great scholars was Abu Hamid Muhammad ibn Muhammad ibn Muhammad Al-Ghazali (450 A.H / 505 A.H). He was one of the greatest scholars of the Islamic nation. Al-Ghazali has discussed many of the concepts and terminologies with educational and psychological meanings, which can be established from his work, particularly the concepts related to the subject of moral behavior. Al-Ghazali focused his studies on the congenital behavior on the spiritual direction, which is the ultimate goal of moral behavior, and on showing virtue and self-control, taming and elevating the soul of impurities, and achieving mental happiness (Morsi, 1992). Al-Ghazali initiated the concept of moral behavior to discover the scientific capabilities in psychological studies. His aim was to scientifically attempt to awaken the discouraged feelings of learners and specialists and to draw out the best scholars, who could address the issues of intellectuals and scholars.

## **1.2 Background of the study**

Moral behavior is one of the moral issues common to all humanity that philosophers and thinkers have been drawn to search and study throughout the ages until the present. Historical roots and contributions of great Muslim scholars who have been greatly affected by the Islamic ethics presented in the Holy Quran and the Sunnah (Al-Sulaimany & Bar,1996).

Moreover, since the beginning of the second century, Muslim scholars seemed to direct their attention towards the translation of books on various sciences of the ancient civilizations as a result of the Muslim caliphs' encouragement. Consequently, this condition resulted in the emergence of a great number of Islamic



and moral studies as a natural result of the transfer and translation of knowledge and the encouragement of the caliphs (Seljuk,1961).

One of these great scholars was Abu Hamid Muhammad ibn Muhammad ibn Muhammad Al-Ghazali. Al-Ghazali has discussed many of the concepts and terminologies with educational and psychological meanings, particularly the concepts related to the subject of moral behavior because morals have a significant effect on human behavior. Human behavior is the result of numerous stable traits that lie within the human self. A linkage exists between the human self and behavior, where good deeds originate from a good self. The importance of morals stems from being able to refine and polish the human self.

According to Al-Shammari (2008), morals are very important for a person to have a balanced personality and to build a willingness within himself to face difficult choices, by which he learns how to distinguish between right and wrong or between vice and virtues.

The present study is explorative in nature and requires high level of understanding to gather a rich amount of information, providing insightful views that may provide other valuable instrument validation. The current study is limited to postgraduate students (Master and PhD) from the school of Educational Studies and Social Sciences in “Universiti Sains Malaysia” because they are more knowledgeable about moral behavior and they can provide better responses to the questionnaire.

### **1.3 Statement of the Problem**

Recently, moral behavior problems among Malaysian citizens are increasing rapidly. Reviewed literature in Malaysian contexts revealed that moral behavior problems such as crime, violence; substance abuse and excessive sexual indulgence are common in adolescents and young adults, which lead to conflicts, resentment, and loss of self-respect, loneliness, depression, anxiety and others (Chenary & Azadboni,2011). In the assertion of Glenn, Koleva, Iyer, Graham, and Ditto (2010), one of the main reasons for this situation is the lack of moral behavior which is facing a great challenge steamed from its concept adherence. The current misconception of moral behaviors indulged the society is in a state of estrangement and loss of self-actualization, weakening their cultural and civilized identity (Shibli, 2010). According to Tan (2011), the misconception of moral behavior resulted in the noticeable increased rate of crimes nowadays, the overall index crime rate was at a distressing level of 746 per 100,000 populations in 2006, rising to 767 per 100,000 in 2007 and 2008, and falling somewhat to 740 per100, 000 in 2009. For example, the total number of rape incidents in Malaysia is increasing every year. Table 1.1 below indicates the number of rape cases in the years 2000-2010.

**Table 1.1*****Rape Cases in Malaysia, 2000-2010 (by State)***

<b>State</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2003</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2010</b>
Johor	194	234	235	312	323	324	343	473	535	589	585
Kedah	110	123	132	119	127	163	221	313	314	344	339
Kelantan	52	74	70	66	82	90	152	167	246	308	307
Melaka	43	43	57	67	100	77	125	139	130	110	106
Negeri Sembilan	59	82	62	69	89	97	103	153	194	210	182
Pahang	74	79	79	70	102	84	143	194	206	221	223
Perak	91	79	100	118	121	148	183	226	234	257	294
Perlis	12	10	13	11	21	26	28	27	41	43	40
Penang	61	75	73	70	89	71	115	161	177	179	150
Sabah	109	94	115	111	149	156	199	196	236	261	239
Sarawak	81	79	77	71	94	117	129	136	139	204	202
Selangor	216	269	253	280	289	368	421	562	630	623	639
Terengganu	48	48	45	38	58	99	127	130	141	122	137
Kuala Lumpur	67	97	120	77	116	111	142	221	186	155	152
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,21</b>	<b>1,38</b>	<b>1,43</b>	<b>1,47</b>	<b>1,76</b>	<b>1,93</b>	<b>2,43</b>	<b>3,09</b>	<b>3,40</b>	<b>3,62</b>	<b>3,59</b>

*Sources:* Women's Centre for Change, Penang, [www.wccpenang.org](http://www.wccpenang.org)

Statistics on Women, Family and Social Welfare (2006), Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development

Written Reply to Questions in House of Representatives, Parliament of Malaysia (2010),

Reference: 2517

Royal Malaysian Police

The major factor that contributes to the noticeable percentages of crime is due to being far away from faith (Islam) when the level of religion is a bit weak (Bar, 1998). People with this missing or weak factor, i.e., faith, cannot stop themselves from doing things that are forbidden in Islam. Such things are strictly

highlighted in the Holy Quran which commands people to perform good moral practices (Chenary & Azadboni, 2011). Furthermore, Al-lari (1992) argued that immoral practices, such as, corruption, youth deviation, drug obscenity, treason, violence, gossip, hypocrisy, lies, arrogance, and stinginess placed numerous social reformers in a state of desperation and rendered the powerless to implement effective reforms in their societies (Moradi,2008). Moreover, the Islamic religious principals considered these immoral actions as sins which are against Islamic religion, which in turns distract humans from the right path and lead them towards a doomed end being diverted from religious principles, people were pushed towards shamefulness, scandals, the clearly obscene, and the wrong deeds that drive them away from God, and close to Satan. Such doors are open to God's burning hell, which looks into the hearts of men (Al-Ghazali, 2004). In addition, human behavior is a significant indicator for the development of moral practices; for example, scientific investigation found that, in the past, moral became associated with desired actions, including those related to killing, injustice, usury, adultery, and belittling people (Abdullah,2010). For instance, some of these behaviors have been transformed into worrisome conditions that affect all aspects of life, leading all who are concerned about society to have a great deal of fear and worry (Moradi,2008).

Consequently, morals represent the basic pillar in states life; it represents the main guide to human behavior which without them one cannot talk about the safety, stability development of a society (Ahsinat,2008). Furthermore, morals play an important role in the development and superiority of societies on one hand and in their moral deterioration on the other hand because good morals of individuals within states and societies represent the fixed principles by which social relations are held.

When individuals lack these principles, social relations cannot be upheld (Mushref,2009).

It can be said that, human behavior is the result of numerous stable traits that lie within the human self. A linkage exists between the human self and behavior, where good deeds originate from a good self. The importance of morals stems from being able to refine and polish the human self (Al-Shammari,2008). Morals are very important for a person to have a balanced personality and to build a willingness within himself to face difficult choices, by which he learns how to distinguish between right and wrong or between vices and virtues.

According to the literature reviewed by Chenary and Azadboni (2011), Tan (2011), Shibli(2010), and Glenn et al. (2010), the present concept of moral behavior is at a crossroad. Besides, it lacks many essential traits that provide the basis for good morals, such as the faith (Bar1998, p.9) and sincerity, favor, righteousness, piety, shyness, trust, honesty, patience, modesty, generosity, thriftiness, justice, courage, doing what is right, planning to do the right deeds and to avoid doing the bad things, giving advice, and satisfaction ( Ibrahim, 2001, p.97). What complicates the problem more is the fact that the western psychology overlooks the spiritual and moral factors from their consideration. It is satisfied with the psychological, organic, social, and cultural factors, as being the sole components of human behavior (Bedri, 1996). Furthermore, the spiritual and moral factors are refused since they originate from the imagination of the religion of Islam (Abdullah, 2010). The present study addresses the need for understanding the concept of ‘moral behavior’ in accordance with Al-Ghazali’s concept which is defined it as a ‘comprehensive and intermingled

concept within itself and with religion as a controlling and guiding basis for the psychological, emotional, and mental bases and as a motivator in developing the different aspects of human personality and also in knowing the ways that lead to the acquisition of good morals and the bases on which such morals are founded'. Beyond all this, the present study requires a wide understanding to provide insightful views that may provide other valuable instrument validation (Abdullah, 2010).

#### **1.4 Objectives of the Study**

This present study aims to understand the moral behavior based on Al-Ghazali's concept of moral behavior.

1. To identify the concept of moral behavior based on Al-Ghazali's writings.
  - 1.1 To clarify the foundations of moral behavior according to Al-Ghazali.
  - 1.2 To highlight the characteristics of moral behavior according to Al-Ghazali
  - 1.3 To clarify the standard of moral behavior according to Al-Ghazali.
  - 1.4 To explain the ways of acquiring moral behavior according to Al-Ghazali.
2. To investigate the understanding of standard moral behavior, as proposed by Al-Ghazali, among postgraduate students.
  - 2.1 To identify if there is any significant difference between male and female postgraduate students' mean of understanding the standard moral behavior proposed by Al-Ghazali.
  - 2.2 To identify if there is any significant difference between Master and PhD postgraduate students' mean of understanding the standard moral behavior proposed by Al-Ghazali.

## **1.5 Research Questions**

The present study seeks to answer the following research questions:

1. What is the concept of moral behavior based on Al-Ghazali's writings?
  - 1.1 What are the foundations of moral behavior according to Al-Ghazali?
  - 1.2 What are the characteristics of moral behavior according to Al-Ghazali?
  - 1.3 What is the standard of moral behavior according to Al-Ghazali?
  - 1.4 What are the ways of acquiring moral behavior according to Al-Ghazali?
2. What is the level of understanding on standard moral behavior as proposed by Al-Ghazali among postgraduate students?
  - 2.1 Is there any significant difference between male and female postgraduate students' means of understanding the standard moral behavior that proposed by Al-Ghazali?
  - 2.2 Is there any significant difference between Master and PhD postgraduate students' means of understanding the standard moral behavior proposed by Al-Ghazali?

## **1.6 Significance of the Study**

The importance of the present study stems from the importance of the subject matter under consideration, that is, the concept of 'moral behavior' as defined by Al-Ghazali. The present work will be one of the studies that demonstrate the contributions of Al-Ghazali on the subject of moral behavior, which stems from a faith based on sincerity, observation, insight, obedience, and piety both in private and in public. Al-Ghazali has been chosen because he was one of the most prominent figures in the history of Islam and has a distinct personality and has a prominent place among well-known scholars, who are leaders in the field of Islamic thought.

Moreover, since no one can count his reality, he was called imam Al-faqih, imam of the fundamentalist, imam of morals, imam of education and psychology, imam of economics, the imam salafi, and reformer. In addition to all these nomenclatures, he was also called imam Al-abid, i. e., ‘worshiper’ Al-Shami (1993). According to Najati (1993), Badawi (1977), and Mubarak (1988), Al-Ghazali has many books that dealt with the issue of morality and this by itself distinguishes Al-Ghazali from other scientists. For example, Abu Musa Jabir Ibn Hayyan (Geber, 721– 815), court alchemist to the fifth caliph, Harun Al-Rashid (763–809), was known for his description of the techniques of distillation, crystallization, sublimation and evaporation, manufactured acetic acid and various mineral acids including aqua regia, and anticipated the law of constant proportions. Ibn Rushd (Averroës, 1126– 1198), whose work was a major influence on subsequent European thoughts, was known for the reaffirmation that the critical philosophical inquiry is consistent with the religious belief (Agutter & Wheatley, 2008). Other scholars include Abu Bakr Razi (864-930), in medicine, Al-Farabi (870- 950), in philosophy and physics, Ibn Sina (Avicenna, 980) in philosophy, Najati (1993).

Furthermore, the concept of ‘moral behavior’ as defined by Al-Ghazali, can play an important role in developing the different aspects of human personality. Therefore, the results of this study are important in the following cases:

A: - shedding light on the importance of the scientific contributions in all the educational and psychological aspects with Al-Ghazali and any other Islamic scientists.

B: - helping to decrease the moral behavior problems when highlighting the aspects of spirit and faith and their effects on the human behavior.



C: - clarifying the right path to the moral behavior and enriching many of the basic qualities which provide the basis for good morals.

D: - determining the most effective factors that affect moral behavior.

E: - contributing to the achievement of values, virtues and moral practices among people.

F: - sharing the recommendations and suggestions of this study with the educational institutions worldwide.

### **1.7 Limitations of the Study**

According to Best and Kahn (1998), limitations are those conditions beyond the control of the researcher that may place restrictions on the conclusions of the study and their application to other situations. The present study has certain limitations that need to be taken into account when considering the study and its contributions. Three important limitations include:

1:- This study was limited to the understanding of the moral behavior based on Al-Ghazali's writings, used on a population of postgraduate students (Master and PhD) from the School of Educational Studies and School of Social Sciences in Universiti Sains Malaysia. The selection of the sample was based on the explorative nature of the current study which requires high level of understanding of moral behaviour in order to provide in-depth information related to moral issues.

2:- This study was limited to the analysis and understanding of data obtained from the extracted texts, concepts, and thoughts connected to the subject of the study from

the books of Al-Ghazali. In addition, a questionnaire also was developed based on the findings from qualitative method.

3:- This study was limited to male and female postgraduate students (Master and PhD) from the School of Educational Studies and School of Social Sciences in Universiti Sains Malaysia. It has to be noted that the current research was not limited to respondents' sect or nationality.

## **1.8 Definitions of Terms**

### **Moral behavior**

Jawhari (1999) emphasized that the relationship between morals and behavior is a matter of signs and their denotations. Hence, if morals are an inner self trait and are recognized mentally, then behavior is the apparent self-trait that is recognized visually. Accordingly, if an individual's behavior is good, his morals will be good, and if his behavior is bad, his morals will be bad.

However, the concept of moral behavior that the present study considers is the behavior that stems from sincere faith and loyalty based on observation, insight, obedience, and piety both in private and in public, in the unseen and in real life, with the aim of pleasing Almighty Allah. This hidden behavior becomes evident only if the owner has the psychological motivation to be honored by God. Moreover, this hidden behavior is manifested as lights that shower generosity and kindness on the attitude and behavior of the personality, as well as view the inner decency and sense of the spiritual supreme (Afnan, 1991). Through such meanings of behavior and character, Al-Ghazali (2004) describes the meaning of moral behavior and says that 'creation' and 'moral' are two words used together. As such, one can say that

somebody is good in manners and morals which, in return, mean good in inner and outer. Moral represents behavior while creation represents character or the inner image. This is because the human being is a composite of a body with eyesight and a spirit with consciousness (Al-Ghazali, 2004).

## **1.9 Conclusion**

This chapter investigates the concept of moral behavior based on Al-Ghazali's writings, who identified moral behavior as a comprehensive and intermingled concept within itself and with religion as a controlling and guiding basis for the psychological, emotional, and mental bases and also in knowing the ways that lead to the acquisition of good morals and the bases on which such morals are founded. In the current research, this concept has been studied by applying it to postgraduate students as a motivator in developing the different aspects of human personality. Additionally, Al-Ghazali pinpointed the standards of moral behavior and clearly it was identified as good or bad morals. Besides, through his writings, moral behavior was considered as an "inspiration" to the main resource of the Islamic legislation that both controls and guides the mind. The following subsequent chapter deals with the life of Al-Ghazali, some of the views of the different scholars in the lineage Al-Ghazali and his trip within the Islamic world and the places he visited. In addition, it provides a wealth of information about his life in terms of traveling and moving from one country to another searching for new knowledge in various sciences, for the purpose of achieving the absolute truth, and the highest levels of certainty.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **BIOGRAPHY OF AL-GHAZALI AND HIS THOUGHT (450-1058)**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

This chapter describes the life of Al-Ghazali and reviews some of the views of the scholars on the lineage of Al-Ghazali. Some of the scholars think that Al-Ghazali belonged to one of the villages of Tous called: Ghazaleh and so was called Al-Ghazali. Some other scholars stated that since his father's apprenticeship was spinning wool, he was called so. Moreover, the chapter also talks about his birth and upbringing, his death, marital status and the resources of his knowledge. It also tackles his trip within the Islamic world, the time he spent or the places which he visited. It is further concerned with reviewing some of his books and letters before his death in 505 A. H. These books have had the attention of many researchers who were interested in his magnificent work. Moreover, it discusses some views of Al-Ghazali with respect to the moral behavior, the mothers of good morals and the following four assets: wisdom, courage, chastity, and justice, which represent the main source of all good behaviors.

#### **2.2 His Name and Lineages**

His full name is Al-Imam Abu Hamid Muhammad B. Muhammad B. Muhammad B. Taus Ahmad Al- Tusi Al- Shafi, known as Al Nishapuri. He represents the proof of Islam, the ornament of religion, and the Guide to the True faith. He was born in (450-1058) at Tus near the modern Meshhed, in Khurasan (Margaret Smith, 1983).

There are two opinions for the scholars with respect to the lineage of Al-Ghazali:

**The first** opinion is supported by some scholars, who believed that he belonged to one of the villages of Tous called: Ghazaleh; accordingly, he was named so. It was explained in the dictionary of Taj Al-Aroos that Ghazaleh as Sahaba is one of the villages of Tous, to which Abu Hamed is attributed (Moawad & Mawjood, 1997). Moreover, it was stated in a report narrated by Ibn Salah that Al-Ghazali said, "people call me Al-Ghazali, but I lived in the village of Ghazali and so my name is Al-Ghazali" (Alohuane, 1989, p.17).

However, there are some scholars who do not agree with this opinion. They believe that the writer of Muajam Al-Buldan did not hear by Ghazalah when he visited Tous though there is no tangible piece of evidence to the absence of this village. However, there has been a piece of evidence that Yaqoot noted that Tous comprises of a thousand village (Al-Hamwi, 1906).

**The second** opinion was that supported by some of the scholars, who believed that the name of Al-Ghazali has been derived from his father's job, which was wool spinning (Moawad & Mawjood, 1997). In this vein, Alaasm (1998) also provided in his book entitled "The philosopher Al-Ghazali" several views on this controversial point, among these views are the view that supports Al-Ghazali's nomenclature after his father's job.

Al-Ghazali is one of the founders of the school of Ash'ari and is a well-known social scientist among the three who came after Al-Ash'ari. The founders

were Albaqilani (403 A.H), Aljuwaibi (478 A.H), and Al-Ghazali (505 A.H). Al-Ghazali is nicknamed Al-Tousi attributing to one of the cities of Khorasan, where he was born (Al-Hamwi, 1906).

### **2.3 Birth and Upbringing**

Al-Ghazali - may Allah bless him - was born in Tous, one of the cities of Khorasan in four hundred and fifty A.H., and one thousand and fifty- nine A.D (Al-Qaradhawi, 1994). Moreover, Moawad and Mawjood (1997) added that the father of Abu Hamid was a righteous, worshiper and poor man. He earned his living from the wool yarn; he used to sell wool in his shop at Tous. His father loved science and scientists, listened to scholars, sat with them, served them and felt that a lot of goodness had been lost because he was not a scholar or a preacher or a guide. That was why his father kept asking Allah to bless him with kids, who can get their education in order to achieve his hope (Moawad & Mawjood, 1997). It seemed that Allah had answered his invocation and gave him Abu Hamed and his brother, Ahmed. When he felt that he was close to his fate, he recommended one of his goodness and righteous relatives to take care of his sons where he left for them some money and ordered him to spend it on them. When he died, the good man cared for their education until the money ran out and he had been forced to send them to the school and continue their education (Yahya, 1986). As for his mother, the history did not reveal anything about her, except that she lived until she saw what her husband had not seen. Her son climbed the sky of glory to reach the highest scientific center in that era (Dunia, 1965).

Dunia (1965) maintained that Al-Ghazali, had a cousin, whose name was "Ahmad Ibn Muhammad" and his nickname was Abu Mohammed, and Abu Hamid. He acquired his religious knowledge from Al-Ziadi and he was well-known among scholars. He was recognized by East and West scholars. He died in Bindharan Tous; however, the exact date for his death was not recorded (Dunia, 1965).

#### **2.4 Marital Status**

Biographies and history books tell that Al-Ghazali had married early and was blessed with children. He mentioned that he had a son called Hamid, but he died when his son was a boy. Therefore, his offspring comprises girls only to whom he had been kind very kind. He reported in his book "Al-Munqith min Al-Dhalal" that the reason behind his return to his home after the long journey was the calls of his children (Al-Shami, 1993, p.43).

#### **2.5 Getting Knowledge**

Dunia (1965) stated that the life of Al-Ghazali was full of unrestricted travels and movements from a country to country. He opened his heart and sentiments to get much knowledge and the various sciences. He sought his goal to reach the absolute truth, and the highest levels of certainty. He had moved from his hometown Tous into Jargan; then, he left to Nisabur, Baghdad, Damascus, Bait Al-Maqdis, Jerusalem, Mecca, and to Egypt. At the end, he returned to his native country, Tous, which represents a mountain of knowledge, and a sea of rich knowledge (Moawad & Mawjood, 1997). Tous was the first country to Al-Ghazali to get knowledge from; it was his native home. Al-Ghazali read in his youth part of the jurisprudence in his country Tous; he was aided by Ahmed bin Mohammed Alrathkani Al-Tusi, who was



a teacher. But, the first teacher was Yousof Al-Nassaj, who was Sufi and who later became the Imam of the Two Holy Places (Dunia, 1965).

Al-Sheikh (1994) mentioned that Al-Ghazali traveled from the town of Tous to Jargan to get knowledge and much more information. He became a student of Abu Qasim Ismail Bin Masaada Al-Ismaili. He read the principles of Fiqih and Usul. He recorded what he learned in sheets called Taaliqah. After the theft of Altaaliqah, he memorized the latter by heart for fear of being forgotten. Later, he went to Nisabur, the capital of the Seljuks, which was a center of science after Baghdad. He stayed with the Imam of the Two Holy Mosques, Aba Al-Maali Dia El-Din Abdul-Malik Bin Muhammad Abdullah bin Yusuf Al-Jouini, and worked hard to learn with great efforts, patience, and sincerity the jurisprudence of the Shafi'i school. He also studied theology, methods of disputes and debates, and logic, and was loved by his Sheikh, who described him as a lavished sea (Al-Sheikh, 1994).

This period, in which Abu Hamid (may Allah have mercy on him) gained knowledge from sheikh Imam Jouini, was regarded as the collection and the writing period. Abu Hamid was interested in Shafi'I Fiqih; in addition to authorship and intellectual maturity. After the death of his Sheikh Imam Jouini (may Allah have mercy on him) in (478 A.H), Al-Ghazali came to the city of Al-Muaaskar where he met Seljuq's minister -Nizam Al-Malik. After five years, he was authorized by Nizam Al-Malik to teach in the school of Nizam in Baghdad in the year 484 A.H. and he continued teaching for four years since then (Ibn Khalkan, 1972).

This reflected the superior scientific ability, which enabled him to achieve this great honor. Historians talked about this period of his life, which reveals the way Al-Ghazali was well-known in Baghdad until he overcame the pride, dignity of Dar Al-Khilafa (state government) (Al-Sabki,1964).

Al-Sabki (1964) described in his writings this stage of Al-Ghazali's life. He stated that when the Imam of the Two Holy Mosques died, Al-Ghazali went out to the Al-Askar (military) to meet the minister Nizam al-Malik. The latter was his council, who used together scholars. He debated imams, scholars and conquered his opponents. Then, he was appointed by the Governor as a teacher at his school in Baghdad and was ordered to go there. He came to Baghdad in year 484 A.H. He taught at the school of Nizamia. The people were impressed by his knowledge, good command of words, grace, eloquence, accuracy, and kindness. They loved him very much and so he kept on teaching sciences, education, as well as Fatwa religious consulting. He was decent famous and away from the vices of the world; he refused wealth, and left all that behind his back (Al-Sabki, 1964).

After that, his brother, Ahmed replaced him in teaching; he made some attempts to go out of Baghdad after he spent four years there. He intended to go out to the Mecca and travel to Al-Sham where he arrived there at 488 A.H. He had nothing to do there; so he stayed alone, acquired self-discipline and modified moral. Then, he moved to Jerusalem and later to (Hijaz), Saudi Arabia to perform Hajj. He noticed that the society of his time is full of rigid thoughts that need to be fought and of people who need to be awoken from their rigidity and publish science. Therefore, it was his responsibility to come out of his isolation, return to Baghdad and hold the

council of preaching and guidance. There, he taught the book entitled "Ihya' Ulum Al-Deen", which he wrote during his tour in Al-Sham. Then, he left Baghdad for his country, Tous and worked for Allah. In this period, he contacted the minister Fakhr Al-Malik, the son of Nizam Al-Mulk. The latter argued with him to teach again in the Nizamiyat Nesabour. Al-Ghazali accepted the call, but the work did not suit him, so he returned again to his hometown Tous. There, he built a school next to his house, and distributed his time between teaching, authorizing and worshipping (Ibn Khalkan, 1972).

## **2.6 His Trip within the Islamic world**

Historians and researchers disagree among themselves in the past and present about Al-Ghazali's going out to Baghdad, and the time he spent or places he visited. As a result, different approaches and views have been launched (Alohuane, 1989).

The reasons behind Al-Ghazali's travel can be categorized into two major categories:

- A. The first is attributed to Al-Ghazali's sufism, and asceticism, which he expressed in his book *AlMunqith min Al-Dhalal*.
- B. The second is due to the political dimensions generated by the events and conflicts between the warring factions in that period.

There were still fabricated reasons, but the above mentioned ones represent the basic reasons for all who talked about this stage of Al-Ghazali's life (Alohuane, 1989).

Al-Ghazali himself stated in his book *Al-Munqith min Al-Dhalal* that he later noticed his indulgent in unimportant science, and his isolation from all sides. He

further found that the best work for him was teaching and education. At the beginning, he felt that such a type of work is unimportant and useless and that his intention in teaching was not purely for the sake of Allah, but was motivated by celebrity (Al-Ghazali, 1997, p.63).

He kept wandering for a long time where finally he opined to get out of Baghdad. Whenever, he had a sincere desire to seek the Hereafter in the morning, this desire lost in the evening. Besides, there was a voice telling him that science is hypocrisy and madness. Accordingly, he decided to escape and flee, but Satan never left him alone as he always kept convincing him that what happened is a casual event (Al-Ghazali, 1997). Such an attraction between the desires of this world and the Hereafter lasted for six months, starting from the first of Rajab 488 A.H. In this month, the matter exceeded its limit as it closed his thoughts and stopped his teaching. He strived to teach one day so as not to break the hearts of the people who come to him, but his tongue failed him. Consequently, he could not digest food and drink; even the doctors could not treat him. That was because such a kind of disease hits the heart, and naturally moves to the mood. So, such a disease cannot be cured unless the reason is known (Al-Ghazali, 1997).

Surrounded by such weakness, he turned to Almighty Allah the one who relieve the distressed and Allah answered his calls. He turned his heart away from the prestige, money, family, child and friends. He was given the determination to go to Mecca and Al-Sham with no intention of being back. Then, the educated people who were away from Iraq thought it was because of the governors while the others who were close to the governors were watching the insistence of the governors to be with

him and how he was symptomatic to them and his saying. Finally, he departed Baghdad, and his money, ran out to the extent he had nothing whereby he could feed his children. That was because his money was for the public and was meant to be spent on Muslims (Al-Ghazali, 1997, p.64).

Those were the reasons, which led Al-Ghazali to depart and if anyone consults historians, such as Ibn Assakir Al-Dimashqi, Ibn Khalkan, Aldhahabi, Ibn Al- Jawzi and Abdul-Ghafir Al-Farisi, and others, one will find that there was a consensus on the causes of Al-Ghazali's trip (Alohuane, 1989).

Other scholars attributed his trip to his relationship with Ibn Tashafeen and his satisfaction with the title of the Prince of Believers. This was because he caused the Sultan in Baghdad to be alarmed (Alohuane, 1989). The disagreement among the scholars was not over the travel of Al-Ghazali, but also over the time spent in traveling and the countries visited. In his book *Al-shtharat* Ibn Al-Imad (1979) said in an attempt to describe the accident of the year 488 A.H. that "in this year Al-Ghazali came to Damascus and wrote *Al-Ihya* and taught it in Damascus and stayed two years then went back home (Ibn Al-Imad, 1979). Abu El-fida said that Al-Ghazali "came to Damascus and stayed for a period and then went to Al-Quds (Jerusalem) and worked hard in worship, then went to Egypt and lived in Alexandria" (Abu El feda & Ismail, 1956, p.33). To sum up, one can say that Al-Ghazali stayed for two years in Damascus and then returned to Baghdad and that he did not travel to (Egypt), and did not refer to such a trip in his books (Alohuane, 1989).